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Appl. No. 10/622,720
Response to Office Action of May 7, 2007

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed May 7, 2007, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,797,875 to Silver ("Silver"). The action also rejects Claim 1 based on a provisional, nonstatutory double patenting rejection based on a claim in a co-pending application owned by the same assignee (Medela Holding AG) as the present application.

Applicant will address the provisional rejection after the present claim is found to be in condition for allowance.

The Examiner stated that Silver discusses a stopper that is provided to engage the upper portion of the female coupling component, as shown in Figure 21, and an aperture that extends between ambient atmosphere and the female coupling component, as disclosed in column 5, lines 30-33. (Office Action, p. 4.)

However, column 5, lines 30-33 of Silver do not describe an orifice through the stopper that extends between the ambient air and the female component. Column 5, lines 30-33 of Silver state that the selector uncovers the leakage hole to allow outside air to flow into the vacuum chamber.

In contrast, Claim 1 describes an orifice in the stopper through which "a flow of air is permitted to pass...between ambient atmosphere and said one of said one or more female coupling component."

Silver does not teach an orifice through the stopper that allows for airflow between the ambient atmosphere and one of the female coupling components. Instead, the leakage hole in Silver extends between ambient air and the vacuum chamber.

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For at least this reason, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is allowable. In light of the above, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

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CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request notice to this effect. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's representative below if any questions arise or she may be of assistance to the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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